

June Greenhouse Tours



This year will mark the first full season of use for Chris Askelson's hoop house.



A view from one of the display gardens at Willowglen.



A touring group climbs the hill to the four-acre Patchwork Green Farm.

Learning about local farms...

June brought both hot and cool weather to Northeast Iowa. This summer month also gave producers the opportunity to tour four local greenhouses. Here's what they found:

Willowglen. Lindsey Lee and Lee Zieke-Lee showed off their "destination" garden, which attracts customers from a 250-mile radius.

Patchwork Green Farm. After 11 seasons of growing produce, owner Eric Sessions knows the unpredictability of Iowa weather. A hoop house allows them to get plants growing a month in advance without the threat of frost.

Rock Spring Farm, which Chris Blanchard started in 1999, sells produce through a CSA and to restaurants and food co-ops in Decorah, Rochester and the Twin Cities.

The Chris Askelson Farm added a 90 x 30 foot hoop house this year allowing him to "time the market."

"The hoop house tour went very well. I would guess that we had about 70 people at our farm, with lots of interest in hoop houses and veggie production." – Farm host

"The hoop-house tour went well down to my place as well. Lots of good conversation with other farmers interested in a different type of farming. All in all it turned out to be a fun day." – Farm host

"Thank you for coordinating the hoop-house tours last weekend. We visited all four places and learned a lot. It was a day well spent." – Tour participant

For more information about the **NE Iowa Food & Farm Coalition**, please visit the Food & Fitness Initiative website: www.iowafoodandfitness.org